

Lights in the Fridge

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Really, who gave a man raised as an only child a baby hardly a few months old and thought it was a good idea to leave them alone together?

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Lights in the Fridge

Lights in the Fridge

Lights in the Fridge

Disclaimer: I own absolutely nothing.

*"A parent's love for their child is amazing, isn't it?"-Collette (**Tales of Symphonia**)*

Small footsteps pit-pattered across the wooden floor of their apartment. Minato rubbed his eyes blearily, wondering what Naruto was up to now. Kushina rolled over next to him, mumbling "Before sunrise, he's *your* son." He threw back the covers and shivered as his feet came in contact with the colder floor. He followed the noise into the kitchen and leaned comfortably on the doorframe, watching his son.

Naruto stuck his tongue out as he reached for the small jar of blackberry jelly on his tiptoes. His small fingers were outstretched as far as they could go and he got off his toes with a huff and pout.

He never noticed his dad coming up behind him until the taller blonde asked, "Naruto, what're you doing?"

The five-year-old whirled around and grinned innocently. "Gettin' a midnight snack."

"You know you really shouldn't be eating in the middle of the night."

Naruto's lips turned into a confused pout. "But if we aren't supposed to have a midnight snack, why did God put lights in the fridge?"

Minato's laugh echoed off the walls as he picked up his son and set him on the counter. He ruffled the blonde spikes affectionately. "Just don't tell your mother." He said, getting the blackberry jelly.

Reason

Werelight

Reason

Disclaimer: Still nothing.

" A friend is someone who reaches for your hand and touches your heart."-Anonymous

Naruto tugged at mom's pant leg. Kushina knelt down by the five-year old, tucking her fiery hair behind her ear.

"What is it?"

"Mommy, do we hafta have a reason for a hug?"

Kushina blinked and smiled. "Of course not."

Naruto grinned with all the innocence of his five years before running.

Sasuke stumbled slightly with an extra weight on his back. He turned to look at the blonde behind him. The six-year old frowned in confusion.

"Why're you hugging me?"

Naruto smiled up at him, the cerulean eyes shining.

"No reason."

Global Warming

Global Warming

Global Warming

Disclaimer: Same as always

Author's Notes: Special thanks to Mrs-N-Uzumaki for giving me the idea to make this multi-chapter. And to all the reviewers. You guys are the best!

This is dedicated to Sean Walden because he's another of my best guy friends and we just became freshmen. We came up with this a while ago, on May 8, but I'm posting this now. I'll miss you Sean!

" My friends are the kind of people who spend hours trying to drown a fish. But I love them to death."-Icon

The soft, white powder floated down over Konoha. Iruka shivered. He wasn't too fond of the cold. He went to unlock his classroom, but was surprised and a little more than suspicious when he found it unlocked. He cautiously stepped inside, his hand reaching for his kunai holster, before his coffee eyes widened as he saw the mop of gold hair and something bright orange all over his globe.

"Naruto, what's your scarf doing on my globe?" he asked the six-year old.

Naruto beamed up at him. "Global warming!"

Tummy

Tummy

Tummy

Disclaimer: Nothing yet.

" If love is the answer, can you repeat the question?" - Anonymous

The six-year old gently tugged at the brunette's hand

"C'mon! This place is amazing!" Naruto said.

He took him through the forest's winding paths, the rushing water of the river background noise.

"Why're we here?" the seven-year old asked, unable to be truly mad at the blonde.

Naruto grinned and spun around. Things that Sasuke thought were flowers were in fact hundreds of thousands of butterflies. They fluttered through the air, filling the air with a sweet scent, one that Sasuke couldn't quite describe.

Naruto turned to Sasuke, the grin reduced to a small smile, "This is how you make my tummy feel."

Frying

Frying

Frying

Disclaimer : Same thing applies.

" Life's under no obligation to give us what we expect."-Margaret Mitchell

Sasuke mumbled and turned over at the explosion of heat by his ear. The figure above him frowned and positioned themselves so that they could attack him again. Another explosion of heat and onyx eyes snapped open and saw the culprit.

Naruto smiled innocently, his cerulean eyes sparkling with mischief. In his chubby, five- year old hands was Mikoto's hair dryer. Sasuke frowned in confusion.

The smile turned into a grin and Naruto held up the hair dryer proudly.

"I was secretly frying your brain cells."

Muffler

Muffler

Muffler

Disclaimer: I own nothing

"Wisdom speaks with a silent tongue."-Endymion Spring

"R-R-R-O-O-OOOOM! R-R-R-R" Naruto continued to make car noise as he sped around on his red-orange bike, the afternoon sun not making a dent in his noises.

Minato watched with slight exasperation and annoyance. He'd been making them since this morning when he'd woken his late-sleeping father up by bouncing up and down. A familiar hand on his shoulder caused him to look up at his wife, who was grinning at his torture.

"Bored?"

"Little bit." Kushina could hear the lie in his amused voice.

"Try this." She told him as she handed him a tootsie-pop.

Staring at it curiously, he called, "Naruto!"

Minato's mini-me rode over and mimicked his curious expression.

"I have something for you," Minato gave the lollipop to his son, "a muffler."

Church

Boredom

Boredom

Disclaimer: Nothing... yet

*" Evil exists, I know that, and its name is Boredom, and ministers are the guiltiest crew of all."-Galinda (**Wicked**)*

Naruto couldn't help but fidget the clothes that his mom had forced him to wear itchy and uncomfortable. They were a nice ice blue dress shirt with black dress pants and some fancy black shoes.

Next to him, Sasuke wore something similar, but he had a darker blue shirt and he even had to wear a tie! The church pews were hard and angular, making the two boys shift every few minutes in a failed attempt to get comfortable.

As the minister droned on, the friends looked at each other, Sasuke slightly nervous and Naruto with a wide smirk. Naruto pretended he had to go to the bathroom and walked quickly to the rooms behind the sanctuary. Sasuke was impressed at his acting. Several minutes later, Sasuke feigned he was feeling a little sick and Mikoto let him go to the bathroom.

As Sasuke met Naruto at the water fountain, the blonde grinned and they bumped their fists, at another job well done. They had escaped boredom yet again as Naruto tugged his hand out to the playground.

Father's Day

Father's Day

Father's Day

Disclaimer: The only things I own is my ideas and my drawings.

Author's Note: I know this is a few days late, but I've been sick(and I still kinda am) and haven't been able to get to the computer. So, here's my too late Father's Day drabble!

" Raising kids is part joy and part guerrilla warfare."-Ed Asner

There was a strange up and down motion, one that shouldn't be happening before 10:30 AM. Minato groaned and stuffed his head under the pillow. "... Five more minutes."

The mini-Minato frowned and shook his head. "Uh-uh Dad. You gotta wake up. Momma said so."

Minato tried the fake-snoring and not responding trick, but the four-year old was far too smart for his own good. Naruto rolled his eyes, exactly like his father's, and said, "Dad, the sink is spilling over and its gonna flood the house."

At that, the Yondaime literally jumped out of bed and leaped down the stairs, his senses on full alert as he ran into the kitchen, only to see Kushina, perfectly calm, with a curious expression in the brilliantly green eyes. He frowned and turned to the calendar on the wall, making sure it was June. He looked over at Kushina and asked, "Are you sure it isn't April Fool's Day?"

The redhead shook her head, laughing. She stayed like that for a while, and was still chuckling when Naruto tugged on Minato's chili

pepper pajama pants. He looked down and saw the smaller blonde a toothy smile, holding out a crudely made card. He took it and read, in his son's rough handwriting, "Happie Dad's Day!"

Anniversary

Baker

Baker

Disclaimer: Still nothing.

" I thought I was the baker?"

" There's blood on your apron. I don't think that came from a croissant." -The Musketeer

Kushina and Minato cautiously entered the room, almost afraid to come into the house. When they came in, however, the living room was spotless. They continued through the house, each room perfectly clean. The final one was the kitchen and when they entered, Kushina nearly leapt back from the mess.

The counters and floor were covered in flour and batter, something gooey was steadily dripping from the ceiling. There was a puddle of chocolate sauce in the center of the floor, in the middle of which were three boys.

One was glancing up at him with dark eyes, hair color hard to know from the mess in it. His clothes were dirty and drippy and he held a large pan in his dusty hands.

Another was a slightly shorter boy with brilliantly blue eyes smiling up at him. The hair color looked a dark chocolate brown, but little patches of gold peeked out here and there. He held the large bottle of chocolate.

The last one was taller and a teenager. All that was visible was a single dark eye, flour and a mask hiding his features. Silver locks

had patches of ashy white and cream all over it.

"Kakashi, what happened?" Minato asked, looking at his student.

"They wanted to bake you something for your anniversary," At Minato's piercing look, he continued, "They used the Bambi eyes on me!"

Minato put an exasperated hand to his forehead. "What's Mikoto going to say? You three take a bath and we'll clean this up."

Naruto came up and hugged each of his parents in turn, leaving a powdery outline on their clothes. He grinned up at them and said, "Happy anniversary!"

Itchy

Itchy

Itchy

Disclaimer: Still nothing .

" Evil beware. We have waffles."-Raven (Teen Titans)

Kushina awoke to a tray on her knees atop the forest green sheets. She studied its contents carefully: orange juice, coffee, toast and waffles. She grinned and was about to take a bite of the waffles that were dripping with syrup when two coughs next to her alerted her of their presence.

Minato sat with his legs crossed, Naruto sitting between his legs and they both had an expectant look. She gave them a confused frown.

"What, no thank you for us because we made this entire breakfast? That hurts, Kushina that really does." Minato said, feigning pain and placing one hand over his heart.

Naruto crawled out of his lap and looked at the waffles curiously, with much the same look as his mother only a few minutes before.

"Did you want some waffles?" Kushina asked the four year old.

Naruto looked up and smiled. That was a yes. She cut the waffles and poked a piece with her fork, offering it to the toddler.

He took the fork awkwardly, his hand being rather small, and stuffed the piece in his mouth, giving the fork back to his mom. He chewed with a thoughtful look for a few minutes before he gagged and spit it back out onto the plate.

"Mama, the waffle itchy!" He told her, taking the orange juice and trying to clear the powerful taste of too much salt off his tongue.

Kushina gave her husband "The Look". Minato smiled sheepishly.

We really have to label our sugar and salt better.

Bubble Wrap

Bubble Wrap

Bubble Wrap

Disclaimer: Still nothing....damn. And I don't own Advil either.

Author's Note: Wow... 50+ reviews! Thanks to all the reviewers who spent their time reading my stories! So, here's yet another chapter of Lights in the Fridge!

" Therapy is expensive, popping bubble wrap is cheap. You choose."-Anonymous

Naruto stood on his toes in an attempt to peek over the box. It was a good foot or so taller than him, so doing this did absolutely nothing. He got off his toes and frowned, his cerulean eyes calculating how to get up there. Even for a three year old, he was unbelievably smart.

He climbed atop the couch with little difficulty. Having spent so much time with Kakashi and his dogs, he had learned very well how to climb on things. He tried again to look into the box, but unfortunately for him, the couch was a little farther away from the box than he would have liked. He toppled over, causing a crash to go through the apartment because he grasped the edge of the box and brought it down with him.

Minato ran out, knowing full well what kind of mischief his son could get himself into. He skidded to a stop, slipping slightly because of his socks on the wooden floor, and scanned the room for the shock of blonde hair. Not finding it, he walked closer, finally being able to see the over the couch.

He found his son, with a long sheet of semi-transparent plastic in his hands, grinning like he had just gotten a year's worth of chocolate.

"Naruto, what're you doing?" He asked, fighting to keep the smile off his face.

The miniature blonde looked up and held up the plastic. "Playing with bubble wrap."

Minato had a strong feeling that the popping sounds were going to continue for a while and went to go get the Advil.

Revolving Doors

Revolving Doors

Revolving Doors

Disclaimer: It's the same as always.

" Whoever said nothing is impossible never tried slamming a revolving door."-Anonymous

Naruto's azure eyes were as wide as dinner plates as he craned his neck to see everything in the city. The buildings were so large and shiny, nothing at all like back home. He had come with Sasuke and his family to the port city in Wave and had his hand in Itachi's, Sasuke on Itachi's other hand.

Mikoto and Fugaku had told them to go enjoy themselves and Itachi had been less than enthusiastic about taking them. He had seen the city a few times and he had never found it very awe-inspiring. Sasuke, although he was still amazed at the tall buildings, tried to keep a cool exterior for his aniki. Naruto had no such inhibitions and soon released Itachi's pale hand when he saw something that was never before seen in Konoha.

Revolving doors.

Itachi calling after him, Naruto ran and soon figured out how the doors worked and was spinning quickly, a blur of gold and orange, him never getting dizzy.

Itachi, watching the eight year old blonde, simply sighed and let him spin. He was pretty sure Naruto was going to lose interest fairly quickly. After all, you can only spin so long... right?

Stress and Desserts

Stress and Desserts

Stress and Desserts

Disclaimer: Ne, do I really have to say it? sigh Fine, I own absolutely nothing pertaining to Naruto.

" STRESSED is DESSERTS spelled backwards."-Anonymous

Minato and his mini-me cringed under Kushina's fierce glare, her fiery hair second only to her temper.

"So, exactly **how** did Naruto get that chocolate cake?"

"Well, that's a really interesting story..."

"Minato!"

He flinched and said quickly,

"Iwashungryandwantedchocolatesoltookthecakeandweshared."

Kushina, from years of experience, had understood him perfectly, while Naruto was looking up at his father with a confused expression, the dessert's effects on him having finally worn off, if the state of the living room was anything to go by.

Frosting had been painted with an incredible amount of skill for a four year old high on the walls, (Minato was still puzzling as to how Naruto even got up there) crumbs were littered across their once eggshell white carpet and milk had been spilled all over their blue couch.

"You were hungry and so you took the cake and shared with the four year old who I have told you over and over again *not to give chocolate*." Kushina repeated.

"It was blackmail!"

The redhead only quirked a slender eyebrow.

"Okay... it was the Bambi eyes! I can't go against that!"

Kushina sighed and went to get her hidden stash of Snickers and possibly some Advil. Really, were all men so easily overcome by something so simply as the Bambi eyes?

Bad Memory

Bad Memory

Bad Memory

Disclaimer: I still own nothing except the drawings that I am currently working on.

Author's Note: Holy crap, 100 reviews already! I really never thought I'd get this many, so thanks for everyone who's been sticking with this story so far!

"A clear conscience is usually a sign of bad memory."-Anonymous

Naruto inwardly winced as a shadow fell over him. He looked up from his Batman comic book to see the flame-haired woman he had come to know as his mother, her brown eyes had a warning glint to them.

The nine year old had a feeling this had something to do with trying to bleach his dad's hair for April Fool's Day, but he decided lying would be a better way to go at the moment.

And so he took a deep a breath and said, "Whatever it is, I can't remember not doing it."

Strange Girls

Strange Girls

Strange Girls

Disclaimer: Still nothing.

" Girls could be very strange sometimes."-Harry Potter and the Half Blood Prince

Naruto smiled as Sasuke came up to him, waving goodbye to his older brother who had left him at the Academy gates. Sasuke opened his mouth to say something, but was interrupted by a loud fit of giggling a little ways away.

The friends looked over to see a rather large group of girls blushing and batting their eyelashes. Naruto frowned in confusion and turned to Sasuke, who simply shrugged. Girls were weird.

Buffet Table

Buffet Table

Buffet Table

Disclaimer: I am incapable of owning Naruto. This fact has now crushed my hopes and dreams.

"Is that it?"

"That's the buffet table."

"How can we be sure unless we question it?"

*"... Fine. Don't make yourself sick."-Kaylee and Mal (**Firefly**)*

Electric blue eyes stared at the large ballroom in awe. He'd never seen so many people dancing in one place. They were dancing weird though, Naruto decided, because it involved a lot of ducking and spinning. Wouldn't they make themselves sick? His gaze switched to the boy beside him, also looking around with what he apparently thought was disinterest, although Naruto could see that he thought this was amazing too.

"Isn't it pretty Sasuke?"

Sasuke turned to his best friend and scoffed, "You sound like a girl."

Naruto grinned but said nothing. Sasuke was always using insults when he didn't want to admit to something.

"Ne, what's that?"

The brunette followed the eight year old's finger and saw a large table laden with food. "That's a buffet table."

The blonde looked at him in confusion.

Sasuke sighed. "Pretty much, it's all you can eat food."

The taller eight year old instantly regretted those words by the fox-like grin on his friend's lips.

"Don't even think about it." Sasuke warned.

But of course, Naruto never listened and he darted underneath people's arms and around dancing couples and ducked beneath the buffet table, taking a plate, although Sasuke couldn't see exactly what was on said plate. It took but a moment's hesitation before the brunette joined his friend underneath and saw what it was that he had taken.

The plate was stacked with strawberries and Naruto's lips were already bright red and Sasuke snickered. Naruto looked at him questioningly and Sasuke pointed to his lips. "It looks like lipstick."

Now Naruto's face resembled the strawberries. "Sh-shut up."

A smirk graced Sasuke's lips. "So, you sounded like a girl earlier and now you're looking like a girl. Is there something you didn't tell me?"

That blew it. Naruto released the plate of strawberries and leapt at him. Fists flew and they never noticed the table getting lifted off of them and two pairs of stern mothers giving them *the Look*. They froze when they did finally feel their powerful gaze and looked up reluctantly. Minato ran a hand over his face, but there was a reluctant grin on his face. That was their boys.

Author's Note: I'm probably not gonna update for a while, because school is starting soon and karate's getting complicated, so hopefully this longer one will tide you over.

Remotes

Remotes

Remotes

Disclaimer: Still nothing.

Author's Note: Well, I can't go to karate today as I ended up injuring my leg in a stamina exercise, so here comes yet another chapter.

"How am I supposed to watch TV without a remote?!"

"Simple. You get up and you change the channel."

*"... Don't even joke like that."-Cyborg and Raven (**Teen Titans**)*

Kushina came home to find her previously more or less clean living room had turned into a warzone. Quirking an eyebrow, she walked closer to the couch, which was balancing on two legs. The redhead peered over and saw a shock of blonde hair barely visible underneath the couch, a strong arm holding up the sofa. The blonde head looked up and the azure eyes lit up at the sight of her.

"Kushina! Thank God you're here. Help us find the remote, please?" Minato greeted, again ducking his head under the couch.

"Where's Naruto?"

"Helping to look for it. He's looking under the tables and in the kitchen."

"And why, pray tell, would it be in the kitchen?" Kushina questioned, dropping her keys on the counter, looking over it to see the kitchen just as war-wrecked as her living room.

"We might've gone into the kitchen with the remote to get something to eat."

Kushina sighed and asked, "Did you ever think to look for it in it's place?"

This time, both the eight year old and the adult poked their heads out to find Kushina holding up the remote, standing by the TV. She had put it beside the television because she figured it would be easier to find.

She shook her head and sighed. "*Men.*"

Aches

Aches

Aches

Disclaimer: Must I say this for the umpteenth time? I do not own anything related to Naruto, save for a few sketches currently taped to my wall.

*" Nothing like a fine spirit to chase away the pangs of disappointed love."-Slughorn (**Harry Potter and the Half Blood Prince**)*

Six year old Sasuke rubbed at his temples as he'd seen Itachi do when he had a headache, but it didn't quite work for him. He groaned and stuffed his face into the pillow on the couch that served as his bed when he slept over at Naruto's house.

Speaking of the blonde, he came over and looked at him curiously, although the younger boy had the sense not to say anything when Sasuke looked at him like that. Naruto had seen a lot of grown-ups do that thing where you rubbed right next to your eyes, which seemed like a rather stupid thing to do to him, but hey, grown-ups were weird. One thing that his mom had told him was that aspirins were great for headaches.

Sprinting to the kitchen, the almost six-year old clambered onto the counter(a skill he'd gotten from Kakashi, who was often too short to reach the topmost shelves) and opened up the cabinet. Kushina had labeled the aspirin in bright orange for Minato and Naruto, because they often got confused which one was which. The blonde squinted his eyes to read in the light that was being blocked by the cabinet door and nodding to himself, pulled out one just like the box told him

to, carefully got down and got a small glass of water and went back to Sasuke.

The brunette looked at him a little confusedly and Naruto held them out and said, "It's what my mom always tells me to take when I hit my head."

Sasuke had been looking rather dejected for a while now, although he had been doing rather well in hiding it. But of course, he couldn't hide anything from his eight year old best friend and when Naruto asked him what was wrong, he hesitated slightly before saying, "... My heart hurts."

Naruto had smiled then and wrapped his arms tight around the brunette. Sasuke, still a little surprised at Naruto's often random hugs after all these years, stood still for a minute before Naruto smiled up at him, "Mama says aspirin works for headaches, but love works for heartaches."

Wrapping Paper

Wrapping

Wrapping

Disclaimer: I own nothing except the bag of Skittles I'm currently snacking on.

" Yeah, they're goofballs, but they're my goofballs."-Me

Minato furrowed his eyebrows, his entire face scrunched in concentration. This was probably his toughest opponent yet. The multi-colored paper and the semi-clear tape were stuck all over him and the packet of sweet-smelling shampoos and shower gels that he had bought in Wave barely had a single scrap on them.

Naruto sat beside him, handing him tape with several long strands taped to his face. The bright cerulean eyes, identical to his father's, sparkled with laughter at his dad's dilemma. It was Kushina's birthday and Minato had waited until now to start wrapping. He was five minutes from giving up and calling Rin for help.

The door jostled as a key was inserted and both blondes froze and looked at each other, the same thought going through their minds- *Oh crap.*

The redhead walked through the door, her emerald eyes darting immediately to the ground to see her husband and son sitting around a small package, looking like wrapped up presents themselves.

"Do I wanna know?"

Minato's apologetic and shy smile said it all. Naruto meanwhile ran up and hugged his mom close, wishing her a happy birthday. Yup,

these were her boys.

Vacuuming

Vacuums

Vacuums

Disclaimer: I don't own anything.

Author's Note: I figured I'd neglected this story enough, so here's my apology, even though it's probably not enough.

"Men are 44 percent muscle, 53 percent fat and 3 percent brain. This explains a lot of things."- Anonymous

Kushina looked at her boys, eerily similar and she was trusting them with the house while she went for a girl's weekend. She looked carefully at her husband, searching for any kind of mischief in the bright blue orbs.

"I'm being serious, Minato. If you make a mess clean it up. And can you vacuum *once* while I'm away?"

Both preteen and father looked at each other before looking back at her and saying simultaneously, "what is this 'vacuum' of which you speak?"

Can I Keep Him?

Can I Keep Him

Can I Keep Him?

Disclaimer: I don't own tanything. The idea was graciously given by Fallen-Ryu.

" Hamsters is nice."-Kaylee (Firefly)

Many mothers had complained about their kids bringing home frogs and such, but Kushina had simply rolled her eyes at the stories. Naruto hadn't done that. But those same mothers would giver her a sympathetic look before correcting her. Naruto hadn't done it yet.

So when six-year old Naruto came to her one summer afternoon, an angelic smile on his face and his jacket zipped up all the way with an odd bulge in the front, Kushina had become instantly suspicious. Minato had simply looked a little bemused.

Still keeping the innocent smile on his face, Naruto unzipped the jacket and quickly grabbed a struggling auburn ball of fur. When he got a good hold on the ball, Naruto held it tightly, but gently to his chest before holding it out so Kushina could see it.

The auburn fur, while striking, was slightly matted and the bushy tail tickled her son's nose. Quizzical black eyes looked up at her.

"Can we keep him?"

Kushina held back a groan before getting the aspirin. Minato on the other hand went and began petting the little fox, he and Naruto grinning broadly.

Minato's grin widened when he called, "Is that a yes?"

Frosting War

Lights in the Fridge

Lights in the Fridge

Disclaimer: I own absolutely nothing.

Author's Note: Happy Birthday Naruto!

" The psychology exam was a piece of cake, which surprised me. I thought it would be questions on a sheet of paper."-Anonymous

The big cerulean eyes widened when they saw the cake being brought out. Bright orange frosting lining it and light blue everywhere else. There was the Leaf symbol in the center and it was surrounded by ten rainbow candles. And, written in shaky letters, was **Happy 10th Birthday Naruto!** In green frosting.

Naruto grinned at Sasuke and Gaara, a new friend of his that he'd met playing in the sandbox. Gaara didn't smile much, but Naruto could tell when he was happy. The black-rimmed sea green eyes would turn a little lighter and the redhead would relax a lot more. Sasuke was eyeing the cake with a strange mixture of curiosity and exasperation, making Naruto grin wider.

He knew Sasuke didn't much like sweets, but the one sweet thing he liked was ice cream, so he'd asked Kushina and Minato for an ice cream cake, something everyone could enjoy. Kushina had wanted to get them forks for the cake, but Minato shook his head and pointed. The kids were eating with their hands, even Gaara, although he was eating a little more carefully. A slight, mischievous grin upturned Naruto's lips and he scooted closer to Sasuke, took a big

swipe of frosting and painted a smiley face with the quick ease of a prankster on the pale cheek.

Sasuke jumped, the frosting cold on his cheek. Frowning a bit, he tried to do the same, but Naruto had easily ducked, but it got all through the blonde spikes. Thus the frosting war began. Gaara just stood and backed up by the parents. Minato sighed, resigning himself to a night of cleaning the living room.

Brain Damage

Lights in the Fridge

Lights in the Fridge

Disclaimer: I own absolutely nothing.

Author's Note: I was watching Bill Cosby and they were the inspiration for these. And I do believe I owe this story a few good updates, ne?

"Not knowing is not a crime. Crime is remaining complacent in your ignorance."-Kratos (Tales of Symphonia)

Minato was currently having the thought that all children were brain damaged, his son especially. Now, Minato loved his son. The mini-me was his pride and joy, but he wondered if Kushina had been serious when she'd said that he looked and acted just like him.

"Naruto, don't touch Daddy's drink, ok?" he warned the five year old. Naruto nodded and Minato went to get his dinner and one of his sensei's books.

Minato came back and found Naruto hastily trying to put the can of root beer back on the table, the brownish amber fluid dribbling down one cheek slightly. "Naruto, didn't I just tell you not to touch my drink?"

The kid nodded.

"So why did you drink some of my drink?"

Naruto shrugged in a way that Minato found was more reminiscent of Kushina than him and replied, "I don't know."

Minato winced inwardly as he came through the door to their apartment and found Kushina quietly fuming and taking out her anger on their poor remote, stabbing the buttons with her thumb.

The blonde kissed her cheek and asked, "What's wrong?" He knew better than to ask if everything was okay.

Her fiery brown eyes zeroed in on him. "Go to your son's room and scold him for me, won't you? If I do it, I'll start cursing."

Minato was confused, but went to Naruto's room. He nearly didn't recognize him with brilliantly green hair. "... Naruto?"

The big blue eyes, mirroring his own, looked up. "Yeah, dad?"

"How come your hair's green?"

Naruto shrugged like he did so often and responded, "I dunno."

"Naruto, you know why. So why? Did you want it that way or was it an accident?"

Naruto nodded at the accident part. "I tripped and my hair got caught in the paint for the Hokage rocks."

"Why was that so hard to say?" Minato honestly couldn't really care less about the mountain right now.

"I don't know."

Minato did a prompt about-face and went back to the living room.

"Did you tell him off?"

The man shook his head.

"Why?"

"I don't know."

Dear God, it was contagious.

Nutritional Cake

Cake

Cake

Disclaimer: I still have yet to own anything.

Author's Note: This is connected to Naruto's birthday chapter. Not a huge thing, but it has its element to the story.

" This isn't what it looks like."

" Unless it looks like we're stealing your priceless Lassiter, because that's what we're doing. Don't ask me about the gun though. That's new."

*" I appreciate your honesty. Not, you know, a lot, but..."-Saffron, Mal and Durran (**Firefly**)*

"Minato. Come on, up."

"Five more minutes mom." He grumbled.

"Nope. I'm not your mother and I need to head to work early. Feed the boys, won't you?"

Minato wondered why they suddenly had boy s instead of a *boy* before remembering that Gaara and Sasuke had slept over. Groaning, he went to get up and asked, "Why do they need to eat at six o'clock in the morning? They only ate twelve hours ago."

Kushina rolled her eyes and pointed to the kitchen. "Go make 'em breakfast, Minato."

"Yes ma'am." He muttered, "No 'Good morning, Minato. It's so nice to see you, Minato.'"

Still muttering to himself, he went to the kitchen and grabbed sausages and bacon before throwing them on the counter. He got out the eggs afterwards, but didn't throw them. You needed to be careful with them. He heard the slight pitter-patter of feet came behind him and he turned to see Gaara, holding a small stuffed panda that Naruto had given him for his birthday and looking at him with inquisitive sea foam eyes.

"Morning, Gaara. Whaddaya want for breakfast?"

Gaara seemed to see through Minato, who was standing at the door of the fridge and therefore blocking its contents and asked, "May I have the cake?"

Minato looked behind him and saw the leftovers of Naruto's birthday cake sitting idly on the fridge shelf. He mentally reviewed a cake's contents. *Milk, wheat, eggs-it's healthy!* "Ice cream cake coming up!"

Sasuke and Naruto came in, yawning and their eyes immediately focused on Gaara eating the ice cream.

"Dad," Naruto began.

"How come Gaara gets cake?" Sasuke finished.

Minato grinned and set down two more plates of cake. The kids smiled at each other and dug in.

"Dad is so great!" Naruto sang, "Gives us ice cream cake!"

Minato laughed and sat down with his own slice, laughing and eating with his boys. They might as well be, in any case. Gaara and Sasuke came over everyday and had it not been for Itachi, Minato suspected that Sasuke would live here. They were having so much fun, they didn't notice Kushina come in.

"Why are they eating cake?"

Minato looked up. "They asked for it!" he exclaimed.

The kids, who had been previously singing him praises, immediately said, "No we didn't! We wanted eggs and milk, but he made us eat this."

At that point, Kushina couldn't keep her anger and burst out laughing at the betrayed and horrified expression on his face. Between gasps for air she asked, "Why?"

All four of them, simultaneously, replied, "I dunno."

Jesus Christ and Dammit

Lights in the Fridge

Lights in the Fridge

Disclaimer: I own absolutely nothing.

Author's Note: I was watching Bill Cosby and they were the inspiration for these. And I needed to break myself out of a melancholy mood. And holy sheep, you guys are seriously the best. 200+ reviews? I love you guys!

"Man invented language to satisfy his deep need to complain."- Anonymous

Naruto considered himself a rather smart eight year old. He wasn't the best in his class, but that was more the fact that he couldn't sit still. But the one thing he found he could never figure out was why on earth Iruka-sensei could never seem to remember his name. It wasn't a difficult name. It wasn't common, but it wasn't hard to say or spell. And he always seemed to forget Sasuke's name whenever he went along with Naruto's insane schemes, which was quite often ever since Naruto had begun employing the Bambi eyes to full usage.

Iruka-sensei always called Naruto Jesus Christ (who Naruto wasn't quite sure who he was, although he seemed to remember seeing the name that time that he and Sasuke went to church) and Sasuke Dammit.

"Jesus Christ, get down from the lights!" Iruka yelled. Naruto had gotten himself stuck up there while planning a prank.

"Dammit! Stop doing that!" Sasuke could pull too good an innocent act.

"Dammit, get out of the rain!" Iruka called to Naruto. He'd had a particularly bad week ever since the boys had had a movie night.

Naruto turned back to Iruka confusedly. "But Iruka-sensei, I'm Jesus Christ!"

Turkey Day

Lights in the Fridge

Disclaimer: I own absolutely nothing.

Author's Note: Happy Thanksgiving everyone! I planned to have this up yesterday, but I got caught up.

" Every minute you find yourself angry; remember that you lose 60 seconds of happiness."-Anonymous

The three eight year olds crept around the corner, scents wafting to them from the kitchen. They'd been waiting for hours for Kushina to finish cooking and now that she'd gone to the door to talk to Iruka, Itachi and Kakashi, who were coming over for Thanksgiving dinner, the three of them were sneaking into the kitchen.

The counters, which while they never gleamed, were the messiest they'd ever seen, other than the time Sasuke, Kakashi and Naruto had tried to make an anniversary cake. Vegetable roots and stems littered corners, rice grains hidden behind bowls of sauces and stuffing. And there, there was their prize-the twenty-two pound turkey that had been sitting in their refrigerator for a week for it to thaw completely. Kushina had decided to use foresight, knowing how her boys ate just by themselves, not even counting their guests.

The kids could hear the door open once again and yet another familiar voice joined the family gathering. Jiraiya had finally arrived. Sasuke and Gaara each grabbed one of Naruto's arms to stop him from running to his godfather. Food first. The blonde wilted slightly before nodding and Naruto, physically stronger than the other two, let Sasuke, the strongest, clamber onto his shoulders and reach for the turkey.

The skin of the bird was rather greasy and it started to slip from Sasuke's slender hands. "Gaara!" Sasuke hissed, "Help!"

A smaller pair of pale hands firmly grasped the turkey that Sasuke was handing down. Of course, Gaara was rather skinny and had never been very strong, and twenty-two pounds was only about thirty pounds lighter than himself. Gaara toppled backwards, skidding across the slippery tile.

A sandaled foot stopped him gently and the sea foam eyes looked up at an amused dark gray eye. Behind Kakashi, Itachi and Jiraiya each looked at the scene with eyebrows raised.

The three kids smiled sheepishly. "Oops?"

Piney Fresh

Lights in the Fridge

Disclaimer: I own absolutely nothing.

Author's Note: Happy Holidays, people! I hope you all have an awesome Christmas, Hanukah, Kwanza or whatever you celebrate and a good new year.

"It was nice growing up with someone like you - someone to lean on, someone to count on... someone to tell on!" ~Author Unknown

The sight that met Kushina and Minato when they got home was something that they really shouldn't have been surprised at, knowing their boys, but they still were. A tall green tree that would have brushed the ceiling was lying on its side and there were two boys tangled up in the lights. Naruto grinned unashamedly while the other nine year old brunette at least had the dignity to look a little embarrassed.

"Okay... how'd you *both* get stuck?"

"It was him!" Naruto and Sasuke both shouted unanimously.

"I told him not to try and put the lights on by himself," Sasuke began.

"And he was bein' a prick so then I threw the lights at him and my foot was caught," Naruto continued.

"And I moved so they wouldn't hit me, but I tripped and,"

"This is all his fault!" they both finished.

"Where's Kakashi?" Minato asked, searching for the silver-haired teen.

"I'm stuck!" came a disgruntled voice.

"Umm... stuck where?"

"Under the tree! Get them off! They're heavy!"

Minato swallowed back laughter as he carefully rolled the tree enough so that he could see Kakashi's messy hair and a glaring dark eye. "Are you still alive?"

A raised eyebrow was all it took for Minato to drop the tree on him once again before beginning to untie the nine year olds.

"Ow-Hey! That hurt!"

"You'll live. And I have to get these two down before I can help you." Minato explained easily.

When Sasuke got down, he rubbed at his legs. "My legs fell asleep."

"Better than having your arms shoulder fall asleep." Naruto muttered, rolling his shoulders.

Minato then pulled the tree to a standing position so that Kakashi could get up. The teen looked over at the younger blonde. "You gotta lay off the ramen. You're heavy!"

Naruto grinned and stood on his toes to sniff at the silver hair. "Yeah, but now your hair smells piney fresh!"

Happy New Year

Lights in the Fridge

Disclaimer: I own absolutely nothing.

Author's Note: Happy New Year everyone! I hope no houses and/or buildings and/or people were set on fire with the fireworks. (I was unfortunate and the last one happened to three of us. I have a hole in my favorite jeans now). But it's 2009 and hopefully, it'll be a good year! Here's some fluff for '09.

"We are the music makes and the dreamers of dreams."-Willy Wonka

"Mom?"

Kushina turned her head just enough to look at her nine year old son and still keep the pork, turkey and chicken within view. "Hm?"

"Why do you and Dad kiss each other as soon as the clock strikes midnight on New Years?"

"It's for good luck, Naruto. When you kiss someone you care about when the clock strikes midnight on New Years, you're showing them how much you care about them and you're wishing them good fortune for the year to come."

"6! 5! 4! 3! 2! 1! Happy New Year!" Minato tightened his hold on his wife's waist and spun her to face him and kissed her deeply.

Naruto hugged Sasuke tightly before pulling back and kissing him ever so lightly on the lips. "Happy New Year, Sasuke!"

Early Valentine's Day

Lights in the Fridge

Disclaimer: I own absolutely nothing.

Author's Note: Happy Early Valentine's Day, people! It's below freezing down here, which is rare where I live, so I got the choice of staying home. And I am NOT doing PE in freezing weather.

"True love is like ghosts, whom few have seen, but everyone talks about."-Anonymous

Naruto looked up at his best friend. It had been a little more than a month since New Year's and neither of them had talked about what had happened. Nothing much had changed either. Occasionally, there would be a blush on one or both of their faces, but that was about the extent of it. It was the last class of the day and it was Friday. The entire class was antsy.

And Sasuke looked a little antsy himself, which was odd in and off itself. A hand was behind his back and there was a pink tint to his cheeks.

"Ne... Naruto..."

Naruto cocked his head slightly to the left in reply.

Sasuke bit his lip slightly before thrusting his hand out before Naruto's face. In it was a single white carnation that the girls at the school had been selling for Valentine's Day. The flower had faint touches of pink and red on the edges, but the inside was a warm orange.

Naruto's face lit up with a smile as he took the flower, giving Sasuke a light kiss on the cheek in appreciation. "Thanks, Sasuke, but ya know... Valentine's Day is tomorrow."

Flowers For Kushina

Lights in the Fridge

Disclaimer: I don't own Naruto.

Author's Note: I got a review saying they wanted some more family moments in this story and honestly, you guys' reviews are my command. And I figured that since I didn't update in more than a month, I owed you guys more than one tiny chapter. Oh, and I have no idea when Kushina's birthday is, so if anyone knows and I've got it wrong, apologies.

There's nothing like a mama-hug. ~Adabella Radici

Naruto looked around the shop with awe. He'd never really been inside the Yamanaka Flower Shop. He'd seen it from the outside hundreds of times, but he'd never really been inside. Shelves upon shelves of potted plants (some were even hanging from the *ceiling*) filled the store. Soft dirt could be seen on the linoleum floor and the entire store was filled with a sweet, natural scent.

The seven year old looked over at his father, who was talking with the woman he'd come to recognize as Ino's mother. Her hair was a darker blonde than her daughter's and she had gray eyes rather than blue, but the resemblance was still there in the soft line of the jaw and the way she carried herself.

Minato looked at his son. "Naruto, look for seven flowers you think your mom'll like."

Naruto nodded and began going deeper into the store. The moist smell of flowers and slightly wet dirt was stronger here. A pot of flowers instantly caught his eye. They were bright yellow with thin

petals almost like a sunflower and the center was a warmer brown-gold. The sign below them read Coltsfoot. Naruto reached out and gently plucked one free.

He continued down the aisle, occasionally gently running a finger down a petal or across a leaf when he came across a vine that coiled around a tall wooden post. The flowers on it were wide and white. Naruto carefully set down the coltsfoot and jumped for it, slipping on loose dirt as he came down.

Minato ran down the aisle, having heard the echo of his son's fall in the store. He looked down at his son, biting the inside of his cheek to keep from laughing. Dark dirt was sprinkled through the bright blonde spikes and blue eyes were glaring frustratedly at flowers on a vine.

"Need help?"

Naruto picked himself up, but didn't say anything. That was a yes. Minato reached up with ease and lightly tugged a flower free. White jasmine, the small note read.

"This is the only one you have so far?" Minato asked his son.

Naruto shook his head, reaching around his father and showing him the coltsfoot. Minato smiled at the bright flower.

"Okay, that's two. Think you can help me find five more?"

Naruto grinned. "Of course. And there's one up there that's real pretty, but I can't reach it."

"You have to go for the ones high up, don't you?" Minato handed him the jasmine and was forced to go on his toes to reach the orchid. It was lined with purple with a pure white center. Minato had to admit, his son had excellent taste in flowers.

The two mirrors of each other walked through the store, Minato finally settling his son on his shoulders. His toes were going to kill him if he had to keep standing on them to see all the flowers up there. With Naruto on his shoulders, the smaller blonde could see them easily.

"Whaddaya say we get your mom a rose?" Minato suggested, pointing at the outside garden just behind the store. There were so many colors of roses that Minato was a little surprised.

Naruto agreed readily and Minato chose a pink and white rose. Minato also picked out a violet, with approval from the seven year old.

"Dad, you think Mom'll like these?" Naruto lightly brushed a bunch of small periwinkle and white flowers.

Minato grinned up at his son. "Definitely."

The small sign named the small flowers as myrtles. The small flowers joined their equally small bouquet. A long line of lilies was by the wall and Minato slipped one out, the white petals soft.

Mrs. Yamanaka smiled at the two of them when she saw the choice of flowers. "Kushina will be happy with these, I'm sure. Would you like a card?"

"Uh... sure."

Mrs. Yamanaka nodded. "Her birthday gift, isn't it?" At Minato's nod, she wrote something in her loopy handwriting.

"Wish her a happy birthday for me, won't you?"

"Of course."

"Kushiiiiina." Minato brushed her vibrant hair from her eyes as she stirred awake. She'd been napping on the couch when they got home. Her green eyes were pale with the setting sun filtering into the room.

"Minato?"

Naruto's head propped itself on his father's shoulder. "Naruto? Wazzgoin on?"

Minato hid a smile. Kushina wasn't awake until she'd had her cup of coffee. That applied after naps too. Minato leaned down and kissed her lightly, producing the bouquet, card nestled inside the leaves, and laying it on her chest.

She looked down, not totally believing it.

"Happy birthday!" Her men told her, identical grins on their faces.

She reached up and hugged them both tight, eyes bright, careful not to crush their carefully chosen bouquet. The card fluttered to the ground.

May you be blessed even more on your birthday because those boys of yours are one of the biggest blessings you could ask for.

My Other Author's Note: These are the meanings of the flowers that the boys picked out. I found the meanings at [www . flowers - cs . com](http://www.flowers-cs.com). Just take out the spaces.

Coltsfoot-maternal love and care

White Jasmine--amiability and cheerfulness

Orchid-magnificence, love, beauty, refinement

Rose, pink and white-I love you and always will

Violet-modesty and simplicity

Day Lily-symbol of the Mother

Myrtle-love, mirth and joy

Sassing First

Lights in the Fridge

Disclaimer: I don't own Naruto.

Author's Note: I know I haven't updated this in a long time. It's just been an inspiration problem.

*" Okay, this is stupid, childish and dangerous... we start on 3."-
Anonymous*

If there was one thing Kushina recognized about her son, it was when he had been in trouble at school. He'd walk with his hands shoved in his pockets and feet scuffing the ground. As he came through the door, dropping his bookbag by the door, he held out a note.

And Naruto said, "If Iruka-sensei says I sassed him back, that means he sassed me first."

Casting the Characters

Lights in the Fridge

Disclaimer: I don't own Naruto.

Author's Note: It was my niece's graduation from kindergarten today! She was Snow White in the graduation play, something that I found hysterical because she is too good an actress for being almost six years old and she can pull off fainting quite well. Of course, her sarcastic comments didn't help the play much. I think she's spending a bit too much time with me and my brother.

Acting: An art which consists of keeping the audience from coughing.
~Ralph Richardson

Twenty faces gaped at Iruka as he told them. He'd expected the reaction, but it didn't stop his lips from twitching upwards.

"Iruka-sensei! We're horrible actors! We can't do a play!" Naruto objected, standing from his chair.

Iruka let the smile that he'd been trying to hold back show.
"Considering all the acting you do to get out of tests at the nurse's office, I'd say you're a fine actor."

The blonde seven-year-old pouted a bit, sitting back down.

"So, we have to participate?" Chouji confirmed.

"Yup. And don't even think about fighting over roles. We, as in all of the teachers, chose the roles for you."

Everyone groaned. The teachers at the Academy had a sense of humor that generally meant something embarrassing for the

students. Iruka leaned on the front of his desk, reading off the names on the list that the teachers had put together.

"The Seven Dwarfs are... Gaara as Grumpy, Hinata's Bashful (sorry, Hinata, we've only got so many girl characters), Shikamaru, you're Sleepy, Naruto's Happy, Shino is going to be Doc, Chouji, sorry, but we decided that you were going to be Sneezy and for Dopey... Kankurou."

Gaara's brother gave Iruka a look. He was only about a year or two older than them. Naruto didn't know him that well and had Gaara not told him, he would have never guessed they were brothers. They looked almost nothing alike.

"Kiba's the huntsman, Ino is going to be the Wicked Queen. And for our two star roles," Iruka flashed a grin at the class, wanting to see their reaction. "Sakura can be our Snow White and Sasuke... you can be our prince."

The sound of a head meeting a desk was what Naruto turned around to as he laughed at his best friend. When the onyx eyes glared at Naruto miserably, Naruto grinned and said, "That's what you get for being pretty, Sasuke."

A/N: Next chapter's the play. I didn't want to lump it all together, for some odd reason. School lets out tomorrow!

Hungry Gators

Lights in the Fridge

Disclaimer: I don't own Naruto.

Author's Note: Before I say anything more, I am so sorry for taking so long to update this. I had the inspiration and, halfway through writing the next chapter, it just decided to catch a plane to Siberia. Or somewhere. I'm not totally sure.

Anyways, school is nearly halfway done and then I'll be halfway done with high school once this year's out. I thought Chemistry was going to be my hardest class, but Geometry took its spot. We read *The Kite Runner* and my heart just about broke when I read it. Definitely some inspiration from that.

Got to go to South America to visit some relatives for Winter Break. My clumsiness kicked in and I fell off of volcanic rocks, down the steep steps of a boat two days later (twice!) and nearly fell off a ski lift. But I had fun, though I don't know what that says about my mental state. And after being in Argentina's nice 90+ degree weather, I come back home and it is very close to snowing. The news actually says it will snow tonight and tomorrow. In Florida! It's fantastic.

And before I continue to bore you, here is the next chapter.

If you don't want to do something, one excuse is as good as another.
~Yiddish Proverb

"Itachi... where's your brother?" Minato knew if he found Sasuke, he'd find Naruto. It was a given.

Itachi glanced up at him. "Hiding in the school cafeteria, I do believe."

The blonde frowned. "Why on earth would they be there?"

"I didn't ask. That way, if my mother asks, I can honestly tell her I have no idea."

"Smart man. If you'll excuse me, I need to find my son."

The school cafeteria was quite a genius place to hide. The stage was connected to the cafeteria and no one would think to look for two missing actors in the very room where they were supposed to perform. Minato sneaks around the crowds, especially Mikoto and Fugaku, who he can see towards the front row.

"Hello, boys."

Sasuke and Naruto freeze at the familiar voice. Naruto turns with a bright, nervous-but-game smile. "Hey, dad."

Minato had words all ready for them, but they die in his throat when he looks at the Uchiha. Be calm. "What the hell happened to your hair?!"

Sasuke whips a hat out of Naruto's hands and slaps it on his badly shaven head. "Nuthin'."

"That is not nothing. What will your parents-" That's why they're hiding. Whatever anger he and Kushina could summon at this would pale in comparison to what Mikoto and Fugaku would say. "Why did you shave your head? You're kind of an important part to the play." The how doesn't really matter right now, though he's sure that he'll get an explanation from one of them.

Sasuke's nose wrinkles. "Sakura's gonna try an' kiss me."

"She's seven, Sasuke. You both are."

"Doesn't matter. She'll try anyways."

"So... your solution is... shaving your head?"

"Can't have a bald prince." Sasuke reasons.

Minato has to agree, but he can't say it. He's supposed to be the mature adult. "And how did you do it?"

Both of the boys are biting their lips now.

"Sasuke. Naruto. How'd you do it?" There was no arguing with that tone.

"Borrowed a razor from Shikamaru's dad."

Minato sighs. He makes a mental note to tell Shikaku about this whole incident afterwards. "And did you help, Naruto?" It's a stupid question, really. Any trouble one of them had been involved in, the other was there as well. It had been that way since the two had begun crawling.

"Yup." A simple answer, of course he'd helped, because, to Naruto, things shouldn't have been any other way. Hadn't been any other way.

"Minato? Did you find the boys?"

All three of them pull innocent faces when Kushina and Mikoto appear at the door. "Hi, honey. Mikoto."

Sasuke subtly tries to hide behind Naruto and Minato's leg. It fails as Mikoto looks over at him. "Sasuke there you... are... What. Happened?"

Naruto scrambles for an excuse. "See, there were these alligators and they were hungry and thought Sasuke's hair was a duck, so they ate his hair!"

Minato and Kushina groan inwardly and inch their way out of the kitchen, and out of hearing Mikoto tell the boys off, to go tell Iruka that he needed to find somebody else to fill in the places of Happy and Prince Charming.

A/N: One more thing that I forgot that's a bit late, but Happy Holidays and Happy New Year.

Eating Babies

Lights in the Fridge

Disclaimer: I don't own Naruto.

Author's Note: Special thanks to giganemo for sending me some stories of their family to use. Really grateful for that.

We're currently having a family get-together downstairs, my niece and cousin are having a dress-up show up here and I got to watch Sherlock Holmes today! I loved it, especially Watson, and I want to see it again.

Babies are such a nice way to start people. ~Don Herrold

"My aunt's having a baby." Sasuke reports to Naruto as they're sitting on the swings in the schoolyard.

Naruto doesn't quite know what to make of this. He's never known anyone that was having a baby. "Dad said that mom got real fat before she had me. Mom threw a can of herbs at him."

Sasuke can believe this.

"So which aunt is it?"

"Obito's mom."

Naruto had met Obito a few times, like at New Year's or the Uchiha's Christmas party. He'd liked him, though Kakashi had argued with him a lot. He feels a gentle, warm weight on his head and looks up. Itachi's leaning his hands on both boys' heads.

"Come on, you two. Mom wants us all home."

Naruto frowned. In the almost eight years that they'd known each other, since birth for Naruto and Sasuke, they'd call both Kushina and Mikoto 'mom' and neither of them ever said anything. It was just an accepted fact that they were family.

"My mom." Itachi clarifies.

"What for?"

"Some dinner or something. And I don't want to get yelled at if we're late. Let's go."

Naruto is curled up beside Sasuke on the couch. Dinner was over, but the adults liked to talk for hours on end and the kids were required to stay, for whatever inhumane reason. Naruto's eyes skip over the various Uchihas. They all look eerily similar. He shares a look with Itachi, who's sitting across the room with Shisui, both of whom are looking terribly bored, though Shisui is whispering to Itachi; probably some plan to get out of there. Obito has his head in Shisui's lap and looks like he's slowly falling asleep.

Naruto looks for Obito's mother and finds her beside Mikoto. She looks very much like Mikoto with nearly the same faces. But her hair is much shorter than Mikoto's hair. And her stomach much rounder than Naruto remembers it.

"Didn't you say she was having a baby?" Naruto asks Sasuke.

"Yeah. Why?"

"Nothing. Hold on a minute."

As Naruto makes to stand, Sasuke says, "What are you doing?" Though he's not entirely sure he wants to know.

"Just asking a question." Naruto assures him. He waits for a break in the sisters' conversation and says, "'Scuse me, Obito's mom?"

She turns to him with a small smile. She smiles much easier than Mikoto. "What is it, Naruto?" The entire Uchiha family is accustomed to seeing the blonde at their gatherings as much as the Uzumakis are accustomed to seeing an ebony head at theirs.

"Sasuke told me you were havin' a baby."

"Yes, I am." She cradles her swollen stomach. "The doctor said it was a boy."

"He's in your stomach then?"

"Yes."

Naruto's eyes widened to the size of dinner plates. "You *ate* the baby?!"

Mikoto sighs and thinks that it's time to tell Kushina that she needs to explain to Naruto the concept of babies.

Frozen

Lights in the Fridge

Disclaimer: I don't own Naruto.

Author's Note: Special thanks to giganemo for sending me some stories of their family to use. Really grateful for that.

Been watching more Smallville than I can handle and been obsessed with the song Superman by Five for Fighting. New semester for the school year started and I'm in Ceramics 2, so I finally get to work on the potter's wheel. God help the class since I'm so clumsy, but hopefully it won't be that terrible.

Seize the moment. Remember all those women on the Titanic who waved off the dessert cart. ~Erma Bombeck

"What are you looking for?" Kakashi asks, trying to see over Minato's shoulder.

Minato hands him several frozen slabs of meat that he pulls out of the freezer. "Hold that, will you? And I'm looking for some kind of frozen eatables that doesn't involve actual cooking experience."

"Why don't you just call Rin?" Kakashi sets the meat down, arms already out in preparation for the next batch.

"Already did. She said she's busy tonight."

An arched eyebrow. "With what?"

Minato suddenly finds the room very small. "A date."

"She dates?"

"As difficult as it might be to believe, Kakashi, Rin *is* a girl. And a teenager, so yes, she is going to date."

"Who?"

Minato was never one to lie to his students, but this time, for Asuma's safety, he thinks that lying is the wise man's act. "She didn't mention any names." An triumphant exclamation of discovery. "Yes! Frozen... what is this...?" Minato squints at the box. "Pizza for dinner!"

Kakashi only gives him an exasperated look before beginning to pile everything back into the freezer. "Can you even make that?"

"You dare to insult my cooking skills?"

"It's not being insulting if it's realistic."

"I can most likely make this." Minato flips the box over several times in his hands, searching for the bright letters that would be Step 1. "Now where are the instructions?"

Kakashi sighs, snatches the box from his sensei's hands and points to the bright red lettering. INSTRUCTIONS. Minato smiles sheepishly and takes over Kakashi's job.

It was a long while before Kakashi noticed the absence of something. "Naruto's being awful quiet."

Minato exchanges a look with him. "He was watching TV last time I checked." They both drop what they were doing and ran out to the living room, Kakashi having to grip Minato's shoulders tightly to stop himself from colliding into him on the slippery wooden floors.

The sight that met their eyes was one that they hoped would never meet Kushina's.

Naruto was indeed watching television. He was seated at a good distance away, back against the couch, a chocolate and raspberry

cake in his lap and a spoon in his right hand.

"Minato?"

"Yeah, Kakashi?"

"Do you want to explain to me how a six year old got his hands on the cake?"

Minato glances at the box at his son's side. "It was in the freezer. He must've gotten to it while we were putting everything back."

Gray and blue eyes meet as a key was turned in the lock. Now came the fun part of explaining the situation to Kushina.

Screws Loose

Lights in the Fridge

Disclaimer: I don't own Naruto.

Author's Note: The last chapter seemed kind of weak to me, so I figured I owed you guys a better one. And this beats doing Geometry homework.

Children seldom misquote. In fact, they usually repeat word for word what you shouldn't have said. ~Author Unknown

Naruto doesn't know the old man speaking to his dad. The old man has browned and wrinkled skin, his hair (what was left of it) and beard having long since faded to white. His very dark brown eyes were kind.

Naruto tugs at his godfather's shirt. Jiraiya leans closer. "What is it?"

"Who's he?"

"He's my old teacher. Sarutobi." Jiraiya grinned and added lowly, "He's got a few screws loose in his old age."

Minato shouldn't have been surprised when the five year old came up to Sarutobi. Naruto loved to meet new people. But when Naruto held something up to Sarutobi, Minato groaned inwardly.

"What's this for, Naruto?" Sarutobi asked, taking the offered screwdriver.

"I thought you might need it." Naruto pointed at Jiraiya. "He said you have a few screws loose."

Bubble Baths

Lights in the Fridge

Disclaimer: I don't own Naruto.

Author's Note: Had to stay home sick today and it hurts for me to swallow, so I've been living on a liquid diet of peaches and tea. Lovely Monday I'm having, huh?

I find it strange to think that this story has gotten over 500 reviews. It's incredible to me, so I want to thank all of the reviewers and the readers who have kept this story going.

Also, there's a movie and a book reference in here. Kudos to anyone who knows them!

The thing about family disasters is that you never have to wait long before the next one puts the previous one into perspective. ~Robert Brault,

Minato and Kushina step through the door, luggage in hand and they instinctively stop in the doorway. It has yet to happen that they come home from anywhere and there is not some kind of disaster waiting for them. But the living room was clean, the walls devoid of any smears or holes.

Cautiously, they continued forward. "Kakashi! Naruto!" Minato called. "We're home."

"Over here!"

Minato was grateful that there was no anger, restrained or otherwise, in his student's voice. Minato left his suitcase by the door, Kushina

going immediately for a glass of grape juice (Suna didn't have any and she mourned it) and he glanced in the bathroom.

His eyebrows disappeared into his bangs when he saw the sight that lay within. There were bubbles frosting the ceiling (he was not even going to *begin* to think about how they got up there) and water had formed puddles on the tiled floor.

Kakashi was doing a very good impression of Santa Claus with his hair all plastered flat like it was and the bubbles framing his chin in a rather impressive beard. His clothes were plastered to him and Pakkun was resting comfortably on his shoulder.

Minato's seven year old was standing in the tub, pajamas soaked through and had apparently been attempting to make a mohawk out of his hair with the bubbles when he walked in. The fox that Naruto had brought home, named Sohrab after a character in a book that Sasuke had read, was pawing at the almost-mohawk.

Minato sighed. "Dare I ask?"

Kakashi arched an eyebrow. "Go ahead, ask."

"Alright. What in the name of the Holy Hand Grenade of Antioch is going on?"

Kakashi let out a long breath. "Let's just say that Pakkun and Sohrab don't exactly get along all that well."

Minato fetched a towel from the hall closet and motioned Kakashi over to him. When the teenager neared, Minato began furiously, though he was careful not to let it really hurt, toweling the silver hair dry. "I think that is putting it very, very lightly."

"At least Kushina doesn't have to work very hard to get Naruto into the bath." Kakashi said hopefully and Minato had a feeling that there was a slight, sheepish smile beneath the mask and beard.

"You're lucky I'm tired, brat." Giving the moist hair a final, affectionate ruffle, Minato continued, "I'm so tired from the trip that I forgot to get a picture of this for blackmail."

"How are you tired after coming back from vacation?" Kakashi whirled to glare at him, though much of the effect was lost because of the bubbly beard. "And you wouldn't dare."

Minato grinned wickedly. "I would. But because I'm such a good person, I decided to give you a break." He crossed the room to his son, careful to avoid the puddles. Naruto grinned at him and hugged his father tightly, leaving Minato with a very wet midsection.

"Oh, and by the way, Kakashi," The teenager looked at his teacher. "What kind of student did I teach that you can't even show a seven year old how to make a mohawk with bubbles?"

Kakashi tossed the towel at him. "See if I baby/pet-sit for you again."

Minato's laughter echoed off of the bubble-frosted walls.

Taped Together

Lights in the Fridge

Disclaimer: I don't own Naruto.

Author's Note: Argh. Haven't had a computer for going on three weeks now and of course, that's when I get the break in all the writer's blocks.

Cousins from Texas are over for their spring break and I forgot how quiet the house gets without so many people around. Got to go to Megacon last weekend, but I was way too lazy to dress up.

This stemmed from watching three hours straight of America's Funniest Home Videos with my cousins last night with a healthy finishing dose of The Ugly Truth.

*You can't deny laughter; when it comes, it plops down in your favorite chair and stays as long as it wants. ~Stephen King, **Hearts in Atlantis***

"I thought you said you were going to tape us?" Naruto looked up at his dad who had an odd, black box in his hands.

Sasuke was standing right beside him, looking just as puzzled as his best friend. It was one of their many dinners that the Uchihas and the Uzumakis spent together. Minato looked around the video camera at the two five year olds. "I am taping you."

Naruto shook his head and pointed at the camera. "That's not tape. Tape's clear. I've seen it when Mom wraps the Christmas presents."

It took a moment, but realization finally dawned on Minato. "Oh, you thought that I meant that I was physically going to tape you. Oh,

boys..."

Sasuke and Naruto frowned at each other before looking over at Itachi and Kakashi, both lounging on the couch with coffee in their hands, though Kakashi looked as though he were biting back a chuckle and Itachi's eyes were rather shiny with suppressed laughter.

"I don't get it." The boys said in unison.

Those words were the trigger and everyone save for the two best friends collapsed helplessly into laughter. Naruto looked around at them, smiling as if he wished to join in if someone were to explain the joke.

Minato just hugged his son-sons, really. Sasuke and Itachi were very nearly as part of the family as Kakashi and Kushina were-and simply said between his laughs, "You boys will be the death of me."

Kushina leaned her shoulder against the wall, lips quirked as she looked at the patchwork family that they made. Minato was right-they would be the death of them with their pranks and endless mischief, however innocent it might start out. But what a glorious way to die, she thought, surrounded by family and laughter.

Bathtime and Sons

Disclaimer: I own nothing.

Author's Note: Finally got both the inspiration and the time to write this. I'm gonna be trying to finish up just about everything that I haven't really updated for a while. The Silver Lining is definitely gonna be getting a new chapter probably in the next month or so. The chapter's already started, it's just hit some road blocks.

I've gotta rewrite Cinderella using Celtic cultural influences for English class and if anyone's got any information that could help, please send me a message or something! Three weeks of school left and I cannot wait.

As for this chapter, this is something my sister and her daughter had going this afternoon and I thought I'd share.

Of all the animals, the boy is the most unmanageable. ~Plato

Kushina raked a hand through her hair. Naruto had come home sweaty from playing outside. She didn't mind that usually, but she was not in the mood for it today when dinner was in danger of burning and she had some paperwork to get done by tomorrow morning for Tsunade and she still had to get her child in the bath.

"Go take a shower, Naruto." She told her son who, at six years old, was the spitting image of his father with the rebelliousness that Kushina is rather regretting that comes from her side of the family.

Naruto tilted his head quizzically at her. "But mom, I'm not grounded. I've been behaving!"

Kushina took a deep breath and let it out slowly. Patience, she reminded herself. "Showering has nothing to do with whether you're grounded or not. It's hygiene!"

Naruto's nose wrinkled. "Showering is definitely a punishment, mom."

Kushina resists the urge to toss her son into the shower while he's still dressed and is grateful when her husband walks in the door. "Minato, give your son a bath, won't you?"

"Lovely to see you too, honey." He kisses her swiftly and takes a long look at 'his' son. "Come on, boyo. In the bath." When Naruto looks like he's about to make a break for it, Minato snatches the back of his collar and carries him with ease.

Locking the bathroom door behind him, he turns on the water and helps Naruto undress. Naruto's hair is matted with dirt and it takes some hard scrubbing to get it all out. And then he doesn't want to get out of the bath because he likes playing with Mr. Duck and Sir Stegosaurus.

When both father and son come out of their respective rooms, changed and cleaned, Kakashi is helping Kushina set the table. Kakashi arches a silver eyebrow. "Interesting afternoon, I take it?"

"It's *not* my fault." Minato says immediately. "I didn't do this all by myself, though no one seems to want to remember that."

"I can't imagine why." Kakashi said dryly.

Minato swells with indignation. "When he does something cute, he's his mother's son. When he does something clever, he's Jiraiya's godson. But when he acts like a little beast, he's *my* son."

" *Your* son," Kushina said, punctuating the words with a glare as she hands Minato the forks. "Is not a beast."

Minato wants to throw his hands up. "See? I just can't win!"

First Day of School

Lights in the Fridge

Disclaimer: I don't own Naruto.

Author's Note: I know it's been a while and I'm sorry. The plot bunnies for this story were just not coming. My brother and I have begun writing a book (Yes!) So far, we're at a hundred pages. Saw Inception the other day and I fell in love with that movie. I wanted to see it again as soon as it was over.

School has just begun. Yes, I know. The torture of all tortures. Starting my junior year of high school and the first year our school is going to try having 7 periods. Let's see how long this lasts.

Good luck for the coming year, guys!

If there were no schools to take the children away from home part of the time, the insane asylums would be filled with mothers. ~Edgar W. Howe

Minato steps through the door, shrugging off the coat and laying over the back of the dining room chair. He knew that school had gotten out a good two hours ago, but it was suspiciously quiet. He takes a few steps into the living room and is surprised to see four people he knows very well sitting on the couch.

"Hey guys." He begins cautiously. He doesn't trust this odd silence.

Naruto, Sasuke, Kakashi and Itachi all look at him with very dull eyes. "Hi dad." Naruto says, but it sounds almost dejected.

Minato quickly flees to the kitchen, feeling like he was in an episode of that show. What was it called... The Twilight Zone? He can't remember the last time his eight year old was any kind of dejected.

Kushina looks back at her husband. Clearly, she hadn't gone home much sooner than he had. She hadn't changed and was in the process of making herself a sandwich. "Hey, welcome home."

He kisses her briefly, glad that she, at least, seemed untouched by the Twilight Zone going on in their living room. "What's happened?"

"It's the first day of school." Kushina says it like it explains everything.

Which it most certainly *didn't* .

So Minato turns back around and goes to look down the four children-in truth, Itachi and Kakashi weren't children anymore, already over sixteen, but he thinks that they'll always be children to him. "Alright, one of you-I don't care which-give me an explanation as to what's going on."

They all look up at him. "I hate the first day." They reply in perfect and probably never to be repeated unison.

"Why?" Minato asks, honestly perplexed. He doesn't remember the Academy being *that* bad.

"I can't find any of my classes!" Naruto complains.

Sasuke wrinkles his nose. "I have to put up with a whole new class of girls."

"The endless speeches about dress code and etiquette. Again." Kakashi says, gesturing vaguely at his mask.

"It's very boring." Itachi says simply. "And the day seems to last forever."

"But it's only one day." Minato reminds them.

They shake their heads.

"It goes on for at least the rest of this week, dad." Naruto tells him.

Minato groaned. This Twilight Zone episode was going to last for the rest of the week? Fantastic.

Squeaking in the Rain

Disclaimer: Don't own anything!

Author's Note: Went to go see Scott Pilgrim last night. I loved it. Hysterical movie, especially for gamers like me. Got this idea when we were walking back to the car (in the rain) and we couldn't remember where we parked. (sixteen years of living in Florida and Disney parking still defeats us)

Some people walk in the rain, others just get wet. ~Roger Miller

Squeak. Squeak. Squeak.

"Wait up, Dad!"

Minato turns back to his seven year old son. They're both bright spots in the gray of the sudden rain that had fallen on Konoha. Naruto had a bag of groceries that he had to hold with both arms-it was only the milk, but he'd been so proud that he could finally pick up the jug-and they needed to get home before Kushina did from Mikoto's house so that they had a chance to dry off and stick their clothes in the dryer.

More than half a decade being married to her and Minato has yet to learn that Kushina had long ago abandoned her hope that her boys could learn to simply wait for the rain to stop instead of trudging through it.

"Hurry up, boyo. We need to get out of this rain. Your mom'll kill me if I get you sick."

Naruto speeds up as much as he can. *Squeaksqueaksqueak.*

Minato frowns, searching for the source of the noise and finds it quickly. Naruto's flip-flops, wet from stepping in puddles.

Naruto has to kind of waddle to walk with the milk-Minato had tried to give him something a little lighter, but his son's stubbornness rivaled his own-which makes slower squeaks once he catches up.

Squeak... Squeak.

Minato sighs, hating that sound. They hurry across the crosswalk-*squeaksqueaksqueak* -and they're four blocks from home.

Squeak. Squeak. Squeak, squeak

Four more blocks of squeaks. Minato hopes he can survive.

What Baby?

Disclaimer: Don't own anything!

Author's Note: My cousin, new mom that she is, had this moment while we were leaving our uncle's house. Ah, family...

Insanity is hereditary - you get it from your kids. ~Sam Levenson

Minato looks back to his wife who was still talking to Mikoto, her six month old son sitting on her lap. Sasuke resembled Mikoto, moreso than he did Fugaku anyway. Itachi sat beside his mother and brother, holding Naruto, nearly three months old now, in his arms.

"Baby." Minato reminds Kushina as she turns to leave.

The redhead looks at him. "Strange time for pet names."

"No, baby." Minato wishes he could gesture, but his arms are full with Kushina's coat and Naruto's extra warm blankets. It was rather cold outside, though it wasn't quite cold enough to snow this year.

Kushina arches an eyebrow in confusion. Minato says, "Our baby."

"What baby?" Kakashi snorts from where he's taking a drink from a plastic cup-Minato wonders if it's a laugh-and he can see Itachi smirking slightly from where he's repositioning Naruto so that it would be easier for Kushina to take him. At their reactions, Kushina's eyes widen. "Oh, *our* baby... of course I knew what you were talking about. I was just joking."

Minato can't help but smile, even as he's shaking his head at Kushina as she takes Naruto from Itachi. And she called *him* forgetful.

Traitors

Disclaimer: Don't own anything!

Author's Note: Studying child psychology in Psychology. Interesting subject and the conversation we had was what inspired me to write this.

Babies are always more trouble than you thought - and more wonderful. ~Charles Osgood

When she got the call not long after midnight, she'd been very close to snapping at the person on the other line. But then she hears the person's voice and she calms down just enough to ask, "Sensei, why are you calling me in the middle of the night?"

Minato chuckles sheepishly, but he still sounds tired underneath it. "I was thinking..."

"Never a good sign with you." Rin teases gently, resigning herself to being well and truly awake now as she sits up, her free arm resting on bent knees.

"Such unkind words already?"

Rin glances lazily at the red numbers glowing softly. "Sensei, it's two thirty-seven in the morning."

"Alright, alright." She can imagine Minato running a hand through his messy hair, a nervous habit of his. "I think there's something wrong with Naruto and I'd much rather risk your wrath than Lady Tsunade's."

"I'll be over there in ten minutes."

The door opened almost before she raised her hand to knock. Minato looked exhausted, dark circles under his eyes, which looked a little less bright than usual. Kushina was holding her month-old son as she leaned on the back of the couch and she didn't look much better than her husband. Kakashi was coming out of the kitchen, several mugs of steaming coffee in his hands. Apparently, calling Rin in had been a last resort. Smart sensei.

"What's wrong?" She asked, shedding her coat. It was chilly outside, especially since it was only November. This winter would be a cold one.

"We think he's sick." Minato said as Kushina handed her Naruto. Rin wasn't a pediatrician by any means-she'd done most of her medical training out in the field-but there were some things that every doctor knew.

Rin brushed the blonde strands of hair off his forehead before feeling for a fever. Nothing. She checks his pupils for dilation, but nothing. He was crying a little and his cheeks were pinkened, but nothing too out of the ordinary for a baby.

"When'd he last wake up?" She asks, checking the clock.

"Before about twenty minutes ago? About two hours back." Kushina replies. "He was hungry, so we gave him some milk."

"And this time?"

The other three occupants of the house stared at her. "What do you mean, this time?" Kakashi asks. He and Minato are standing a few feet away from the women and child, as though they thought they might be in danger.

"Have you fed him yet?"

Minato and Kushina glanced at each other. "He ate two hours ago! He can't be hungry already!"

Rin rolled her eyes and looked pointedly at Minato's stomach. "You get hungry more times a day than I can count and look how big you are," She hefted Naruto a little more comfortably in her grip.

"Compared to him."

"That easy?"

"Mmhmm."

"How long does this go on?"

"For a couple of more months, definitely."

Minato and Kushina groaned. Not that they didn't love their son-of course they did-but they were both very fond of sleep and they'd been getting less and less for the past month.

"Willing to babysit for a few days?" Minato offered his students hopefully.

Rin and Kakashi both shook their heads immediately. "Not until he sleeps the whole night, sensei."

"Traitors." He muttered.

Mommy Kissing Santa Claus

Disclaimer: Don't own anything.

Author's Note: Sorry for the large gaps between updates. People aren't kidding when they say junior year is the hardest one of high school. Thankfully, it's Winter Break now, so I finally get a chance to update stuff.

I've also been watching a lot of Toy Story and Nightmare Before Christmas, so I've been feeling in a rather kiddish mood.

Happy Holidays, everyone and lets make 2011 an awesome New Year.

" I saw Mommy kissing Santa Claus

Underneath the mistletoe last night

She didn't see me creep

Down the stairs to have a peep

*She thought that I was tucked up in my bedroom fast asleep" -
Jackson 5 (**I Saw Mommy Kissing Santa Claus**)*

"You look ridiculous."

Minato heard the smile in Kushina's voice before he turned to look at her. He shrugged, feeling the scratchy material of the Santa Claus suit itch against his skin. "I wanted to say I did it at least once."

Kushina pushed herself off of the doorframe that she was leaning on. She was wearing white sweatpants with candy patterned all over it and a white tank top. It didn't usually get too cold in Konoha during

winter and Kushina had a very high tolerance for cold. Her hair was tied back loosely, the way she always left it for bed. Minato had found it strange the first time, but when she explained just how tangled her hair got in the morning, he stopped questioning it.

Kushina tilted her head to the side before she burst out laughing.

"What?"

She wiped the back of her hand across her mouth, trying to contain the chuckles, but she couldn't erase her smile. "You had to wear the hat?"

"Of course I did!"

He looked a bit like he'd tried to stuff straw into the red hat with his hair sticking out like that. "I don't think red is really your color." Kushina said, grinning.

"Oh really?" Minato set down his bag of presents, which was little more than the brown paper bags that you got at the grocery store, before striding across the room to kiss Kushina deeply. Pulling back, he tucked a stray lock of hair behind her ear but not before tugging on it teasingly. "I think red is precisely my color."

Naruto dashed into the living room, took a look at his parents sitting comfortably on the floor, backs leaning against the couch that had Rin sitting on one end with her knees bent to make room for Kakashi, who was still looking rather sleepy on the other, and then dashed right back into his room.

Everyone frowned at each other in confusion. Naruto nearly fell in his socks as they slipped across the wooden floor.

"Happy Christmas, Naruto." Everyone choruses.

The seven year old grins, but beckons his mother closer. She leans forward. "What is it?"

Naruto opens his hand and there's a plastic red, heart-shaped ring, the kind you got from the quarter machines at supermarkets. "I saw you kissing Santa Claus last night, mama." He says with utmost seriousness. "You gotta give this to Papa so he knows you still love 'im."

Naruto had never really mastered the art of whispering, so everyone heard him and they all burst out into laughter. Kakashi leaned down so only Minato could hear him. "Santa Claus, huh?"

Minato shoots him a glare.

"It's not funny!" Naruto says.

Everyone has to work hard to swallow their laughter. "Of course not, sweetie." Kushina says.

"He's absolutely right." Minato has a hand pressed to his lips to try and stop the laugh that's threatening to come out. "This is a very serious matter."

Kushina and Minato meet each other's eyes and they burst out laughing.

"Guys!"

Kushina pressed her lips together to stop them from twitching, eyes still sparkling. "Minato, will you forgive me for kissing Santa Claus?"

Minato holds out his pinky, the only finger that might fit the ring and when Kushina pushes it on, it only goes about halfway. "Absolutely."

Minato kisses her lightly before pushing his son, infuriating loveable charming kid that he was, towards the tree. "Go on, Naruto. You've gotta open your presents."

As Naruto's searching beneath the tree for his presents, Rin toes her sensei in the shoulder. She's grinning mischievously. "That ring looks lovely on you."

Minato is sure that the very same expression is on Kakashi's face as well, even though he can't see it. "I completely agree. That ring is really your color."

Minato pokes Kushina gently in the sides to get her attention and rests his chin on her shoulder. "Told you so."

Cheating

Disclaimer: I don't own anything!

Author's Note: I know I haven't updated this in... forever, but besides a lack of ideas, I've also been trying to get all my homework for the summer done, learn to drive and do an online class to make up for my math grade from last year.

This idea came from a book that my mother had years ago that was full of stories that actually happened from teachers.

There are three good reasons to be a teacher - June, July, and August.

~Author Unknown

Naruto glanced up when, out of his peripheral vision, he saw Iruka-sensei standing by his desk. His grip on his pencil tightened even as he turned to smile at the teacher. "Hey, sensei."

"I hope I didn't just see you copying off of Sasuke's paper, Naruto." Iruka said quietly.

"I hope you didn't see me either."

Bachelor

Disclaimer: I don't own anything!

Author's Note: It feels strange posting for this after so long not even glancing at it. My cousin gets full credit for this chapter, since he's the one who called my other other cousin a master of not being able to get a girlfriend.

NaNoWriMo's started up and, so far, I've got about 1500 words in six days. Such a great start, isn't it? I'm also doing the 30 Character Challenge for the first time. My brother and I are 100+ pages into our editing of our book, which we're going to try and get published.

I've been checking out colleges and I've visited 2-Flagler College, up in St. Augustine and the Art Institute of Fort Lauderdale. I'm going into Computer Animation or the Fine Arts, possibly a minor in English or something to that effect.

A good friend is a connection to life - a tie to the past, a road to the future, the key to sanity in a totally insane world.

~Lois Wyse

The day that Kakashi graduates with a Bachelors of Science, the entire family shows up. (*Kakashi long ago stopped thinking of them as a second family. They are his family now, period. And, as far as he's concerned, that's the way it's always been.*) Sasuke is standing beside Itachi, who's set to graduate in two years-even after knowing him for years, Kakashi sometimes finds his intelligence a little unnerving-and Minato and Kushina are impossible to miss in the crowd, particularly when Obito has seven-year-old Naruto on his shoulders beside them, both cheering when Kakashi's name is

called. Rin stands on their other side and her applause is somehow very easy to pick out among the rest of it.

After he's walked across the stage and shaken hands with a dean, the diploma in his other hand, the person behind him taps his shoulder. Kakashi recognizes him as Genma's best friend, but he can't, for the life of him, remember his name right now.

"That your family?" Genma's best friend asks, nodding out at where Kakashi can easily see Kushina's brilliantly red hair and Naruto's arms waving.

"Yeah, why?"

The other man-Hayate, *that's* his name-smiles. "No reason. Just wanted to say that you're lucky." Hayate begins to walk away to where a young woman waits for him, dark violet hair seeming even darker against pale skin, but he turns back for a minute. "Oh, and congratulations on graduating."

"You too."

The next thing he's aware of, there's a solid bundle of something crashing into his knees and he nearly falls with the force of it. Kakashi looks down to see Naruto hugging him tightly and grinning so wide it, it should hurt. Kushina wraps her arms around him-she always smells of sea salt and Reese's-and Minato's ruffling his hair and Obito's got his arm around Rin's waist and they're both smiling. Itachi and Sasuke are the last ones to come down the stairs and Sasuke nearly does a face-plant if it weren't for Itachi's hand grabbing the back of his collar at the last minute.

This is his family and, sometimes, Kakashi isn't sure whether that's a good thing or not. (*It absolutely is*)

"So what'd you get?" Naruto asks over lunch, ketchup on his fingers from when he stole some of Sasuke's French fries. "For graduatin'?"

"A degree."

"Oh. What kind?"

Kakashi glances at Minato, who's smirking around his straw, and he knows he's on his own on this one. "It's a Bachelor's Degree."

Naruto frowned a little in confusion. "What's that?"

Obito leans his forearms on the table, a wicked grin on his lips. "A bachelor is a guy who doesn't have a girlfriend, Naruto."

" *Oh.* " Naruto beamed at Kakashi. "Then you must be *really* good at not having girlfriends."

Rin and Minato nearly snort soda out of their noses, the laughter is so sudden and strong and Kushina thumps her husband on the back, even as Itachi tries to hide a smile behind his chicken sandwich and Sasuke takes the opportunity to steal some of Naruto's fries.

Kakashi glares, somewhat serious, somewhat playfully, at Obito, who grins easily and says, "What else are friends for?"

Kakashi makes sure to take one of Obito's chicken nuggets when he isn't paying attention. It's only fair, after all.

A Story

Disclaimer: I don't own anything!

Author's Note: This chapter's based on Li-Young Lee's poem *A Story* .

Sons are for fathers the twice-told tale.

~Victoria Secunda, ***Women and Their Fathers***, 1992

"Story, dad! A story!" His son is five years old and bouncing with excitement in his lap and Minato smiles at him. His son is always full of energy, despite it being well past his bedtime (Don't tell his mother that though) "But not a old story. A new one!"

Minato is well prepared to tell his son a story-he knows many of them, he knows he does. His sensei writes books-not children's stories, no, but the creative element is still there-and even sitting in the living room, in the rocking chair that Sarutobi had given them (*"Every child should have a rocking chair growing up."*), which sits beside the bookcases that sometimes seem to sag beneath the weight of their combined books-Rin is always insistent on giving Naruto books for his birthdays-he cannot think of any stories.

Sad is the man who is asked for a story and can't come up with one.

And how will the son think of that man? Minato thinks in horror. The son would give up on him one day, no longer needing stories. And he can picture this sun-bright child in his lap as a strong man (*It wasn't a big stretch. They could very nearly be clones of each other*) who's walking out the door.

Don't go, Minato would say. What about the pirate story? Or the one with cowboys? Hear the fox story once more. You love that story.

But the man would be walking away and not looking back.

A gentle tugging at his shirt redraws his attention to his little son.
"Dad? The story? Please?"

Minato smiles at his son, ruffling his hair. "Did I ever tell you the one about the ninjas?"

His son's eyes, big and wide and blue as the sky, light up. "No."

"Well, once upon a time..."

Duct Tape

Disclaimer : I don't own anything!

Author's Note: It's been a while, hasn't it? Since the last update, I've graduated high school, found me a job and applied for college. I feel like such an adult. School's started up again, so I kinda like laughing at the kids waiting at the bus stop in the remnants of hurricane rains.

I've been re-editing the book my brother and I wrote so that we can send it off to a few more publishers in the hopes that it'll get published. It's taking forever, but it's kind of interesting going back months later and seeing stuff I don't remember happening or wondering if we really wrote some of it.

Recently, Minato's decided that Kushina's insane. She'd left that morning for a day with the girls-most of whom were mothers now, save for Shizune, and Minato wondered when they all grew up-and told him that the baby was staying with him.

And really, who gave a man raised as an only child a baby hardly a few months old and thought it was a good idea to leave them alone together?

"I'll be back before sunset," Kushina had assured him. "Relax. He's only a baby."

Minato had watched Kushina-and Rin, because Kushina had been only marginally less clueless about the subject of babies than he was-take care of Naruto. He'd tried to help, but the thought of hurting or dropping the baby always made him flinch back.

And here he was, staring off with his three-month old son in the crib. Naruto looked like him, perhaps too much. There were touches of

Kushina in the softer edges of his face and in the angle of his eyes, but the majority of looks came from him. Weren't sons supposed to look like their mothers and daughters like their fathers? Minato had read that somewhere once.

But it was morning and Naruto was hungry and Minato couldn't just leave him there. He reached in and carefully, gently, lifted his son up. Naruto didn't protest, just watched him with wide blue eyes. "Don't break, don't break," Minato muttered like a mantra as he drew him closer. Once Naruto was settled against his shoulder, Minato relaxed a little. He could do this.

The three of them were at lunch when Rin's cell phone rang. She ignored it; she never answered her phone at the table, a lesson taught to her by her father. When it stopped, Kakashi's started.

Obito, Kakashi and Rin shared a look-they all knew who it was-and the other two sighed while Kakashi fished the phone from his pocket. "Hello?"

"Kakashi, I need your help. Actually-Is Rin there?"

Kakashi dutifully held out the phone to her. She held it carefully, trying not to smear the mayonnaise from her sandwich. "This wouldn't happen to be a baby emergency, would it?" She was usually the first pick for the new parents to call when something went wrong.

"How'd you guess?" Minato asked dryly and Rin could hear Naruto making sounds in the background. "No, Naruto, don't-"

Rin waited patiently while Minato got his son out of whatever trouble he'd gotten himself into. He was his mother's son, for certain, with her knack for trouble. Kakashi and Obito kept eating, but kept glancing back up at her in case they were needed.

"... Okay, I'm back. Now, hear me out-" She had said 'no' to him before when he asked her for favors, so it was a fair thing to tell someone.

"What is it?"

"... How do you change a diaper?"

Rin pinched the bridge of her nose, inhaling deeply. "You're telling me you haven't done it in three months?"

"For good reason."

"It's not rocket science, sensei, you can figure it out." Rin hung up, slightly grumpy at having her lunch interrupted.

Obito arched an eyebrow at her. Despite being the misfit of the Uchiha clan, he'd certainly gotten some of their traits right. "You feeling okay?" Rin was usually the picture of politeness.

"He needs to learn to do it by himself. He's a grown man."

"Or you're just tired of getting midnight calls." Kakashi suggested.

"Or that," she agreed.

"You guys wanna tell me why you're hanging out by my front door?" Kushina asked, one hand on her hip.

Rin, Kakashi and Obito looked up. They were sitting against the wall outside of Kushina's apartment, legs stretched out and Obito dozing on Rin's shoulder.

"... Minato called you for help, didn't he?"

Rin smiled slightly. "Your husband's hopeless."

Kushina laughed. "Oh, I'm aware. Now, let's go in before he ends up blowing up my house."

She helped them up after Rin shrugged Obito off. Obito blinked up at them blearily. "We done?"

"Not quite. C'mon, spiky."

Obito followed them up with many grunts and groans of he how was too old for this before nearly running into them as they stood frozen in the open doorway.

"Minato?" "Sensei?"

Minato's head poked up from the couch, hair in disarray. "Hey," He greeted, keeping his voice down.

Kushina bent to brush a kiss across his lips before taking a look at their son, sleeping sprawled out across Minato's stomach. Her brow furrowed with a frown. "Minato..."

"Yes, dear?" He asked uncertainly, looking over at his students who were a mixture of muffled laughter and barely-concealed grins.

"Why is our son's diaper duct-taped?"